GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:342
ANSWERED ON:27.02.2008
PROTECTION OF CRITICAL WILDLIFE HABITATS
Paraste Shri Dalpat Singh

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Ministers of all the States have been asked to adequately protect critical wildlife habitats, while implementing the new Tribal Rights Act that extends legal protection to tribals;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether they have been advised to ensure, while implementing the act, that adequate protection is provided to critical wildlife habitats as provided for in the act;

(c) whether the Government and the political parties have hoped that the act would end the historical injustice done to the forest dwellers; and

(d) if so, to what extent this Act has been helpful?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI S. REGUPATHY)

(a)&(b) Yes, Sir.The Hon'ble Prime Minister has written to all the Chief Ministers requesting the States for ensuring proper implementation of the Scheduled Tribes & Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, expeditiously in keeping with the rules provided under it and to ensure that adequate protection is provided to critical wildlife habitats as provided for in Section 4 of the Act. Further, the Ministry of Environment & Forests has also issued guidelines to the State/Union Territory Governments for identification of Critical Wildlife Habitats.

(c)&(d) The Scheduled Tribes & Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 has been enacted to recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generation but whose rights could not be recorded and to provide for a framework for recording the forest rights so vested and the nature of evidence required for such recognition and vesting in respect of forest land. The Rules under the Act have been notified on 1st January 2008.